

Fall 2011 *Street Smart* Media Report

On Monday, November 14, 2011, the *Street Smart* campaign, as part of its fall initiative, debuted the installation of new curb markings that indicate where it is and isn't safe for pedestrians to cross along Piney Branch Road in Montgomery County, MD. The markings are the first of their kind in Maryland and are one of many safety engineering improvements being made to high-pedestrian collision areas throughout the county and the greater Washington, D.C. region. County Executive Ike Leggett was joined by Maryland Governor's Highway Safety Representative John Kuo, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Assistant General Manager Nat Bottigheimer and other regional leaders to laud the campaign's success in reducing the number of pedestrian collisions over the past year. Maryland's *Street Smart* public education team was also on hand to distribute information to pedestrians that explained how to effectively use the new curb markings along with other lifesaving improvements to the area.

We appreciate the opportunity to continue working with the *Street Smart* team on this valuable public safety program. Please contact Emily Howard or John Undeland with any questions at 202-289-2001.

Coverage highlights included:

- Reaching **more than nine hundred thousand people** across the region, specifically:
 - 1 print and 4 online articles reaching **820,906 readers**
 - One print story and one online story in the *Washington Post*
 - 1 television story reaching at least **36,564 viewers**
 - Radio coverage on WAMU reaching at least **50,800 listeners**
- Total estimated publicity value of **\$19,305.25**
 - Print and online coverage: **\$17,000**
 - Broadcast coverage: **\$\$1,655.25**
 - Radio coverage: **\$650**



Broadcast Coverage

Report Summary:

Total Hits: 1

Total Broadcast Audience Impressions: 36,564

Total Broadcast Message Value: \$1,655.25

#	Market	Date	Time	Aired On	Affiliate	Show	Audience	Message Value
1	Washington, DC (Hagerstown, MD) [DC] [8]	11/14/2011	5:00:00pm	WUSA	CBS	9News Now at 5pm (1/2)	36,564	\$1,655.25

[Street Smart kicks off its fall 2011 pedestrian awareness campaign](#)

TBD

November 15, 2011

By John Hendel

[Montgomery County Implements Curb Markings to Save Lives](#)

WUSA 9 News

November 14, 2011

By Kristina D'Ambrosio



Radio Coverage

[New Signs in Maryland Tell Pedestrians: 'Do Not Cross'](#)

WAMU 88.5

By November 15, 2011

Elliott Francis



Print and Online Coverage

[New curb warnings launch Street Smart campaign](#)

Washington Post

November 15, 2011

By Robert Thomson



[New Signs in Maryland Tell Pedestrians: 'Do Not Cross'](#)

WAMU 88.5

November 15, 2011

By Elliott Francis



Photo Credit: Elliott Francis

A new pilot program launched in Silver Spring, Maryland that installs the state's first curb markings -- part of an effort to reduce pedestrian-related collisions. The focus and function of the program is simple, according to Jeff Dunkel, safety coordinator for Montgomery County.

"What we've done here is come up with an idea of putting markers on the curb, that tell the pedestrians, don't cross here, and that they should cross here," says Dunkel.

You'd think that'd go without saying, but last year the county recorded 13 pedestrian related collisions, and that's down slightly from the year before. The stretch of Piney Branch Road pictured topped a list of eight high pedestrian collision corridors. The markers are installed here, about 5-feet apart on both sides of the road.

Silver Spring resident Daniel Lyons was undecided about the potential impact of the markers after seeing them for the first time.

"They might work... then again they probably won't, cause you know a lot of people are in a hurry going to work, trying to go home," says Lyons. "But I think for the moms with kids, it's going to work well for them."

Police stepped up patrols and are set to write a ticket for any jaywalker who disregards the curb markers. If they are satisfied that the markers have reduced the number of dangerous crossings, the 'Safer Sidewalks' program will be expanded to other areas of the county, including Bethesda and Rockville Pike.

[New curb warnings launch Street Smart campaign](#)

Washington Post

November 15, 2011

By Robert Thomson

When travelers ask me what traffic laws say about confrontations between drivers and pedestrians, it worries me: They seem to be asking who's going to get the ticket after a crash. The goal of the laws is to prevent the crash from happening in the first place.

Drivers, pedestrians and cyclists are all equally capable of doing dumb things when they encounter each other on the streets. The laws are supposed to help them sort out how each can go on his merry way without mishap.

But people who work for street safety don't believe the laws alone will protect travelers. Some of them gathered Monday afternoon on Piney Branch Road in Silver Spring to show off one new effort at protection and to launch their fall Street Smart safety campaign.

This particular effort is quite simple: Montgomery County and the Maryland Department of Transportation have installed curb markings along the street between corners and crosswalks that say "Do not cross."

Why do that along Piney Branch and why spotlight a block between Flower and University avenues? Montgomery County, pursuing a pedestrian safety campaign launched by County Executive Isiah Leggett, has identified the Piney Branch corridor as among the most dangerous places in Montgomery County to be a pedestrian.

The site chosen to kick off the campaign showed off the new street markers and some of the behavior they are designed to counter. Even in this setting Monday afternoon, with more police spread out along Piney Branch than I've ever seen there, people jaywalked in the face of oncoming traffic.

One man managed to provide a perfect backdrop for cameras by jaywalking right up to an officer waiting to give him a warning that even if he made it across the street, he faced a ticket.

That reminded me about our discussions concerning traffic enforcement. We had one during the online chat at noon Monday after a traveler wrote in to complain about cyclists not getting stopped by officers on the George Washington Parkway.

Police can swarm an area from time to time, as they did yesterday in Silver Spring. Some people will be oblivious. Besides the pedestrian jaywalking up to the waiting officer, another scene developed in which a police officer walked into a crosswalk to assist some pedestrians. For a moment, it was a little unclear to me — and to the officer — whether an oncoming truck was going to stop for him and the pedestrians.

Safety officials like Montgomery Police Capt. Thomas Didone and county pedestrian safety coordinator Jeff Dunckel believe that enforcement has a role in protecting people. They know it has to be supported by other efforts.

Dunckel talked about the need for "education and behavioral change," educating both motorists and pedestrians.

The new curb markers, simple as they are, have a part in this strategy. They can be ignored — we saw them ignored during the event Monday — but they may lead some pedestrians to avoid a dangerous step.

It's "a way of life in this region to be in a hurry," Leggett said. The markers could make some of those hurried people to pause long enough to stay alive.

[Montgomery County Implements Curb Markings to Save Lives](#)

WUSA 9 News

November 14, 2011

By Kristina D'Ambrosio



Photo Credits: WUSA 9 News

For the first time in Maryland, Montgomery County and the Maryland Department of Transportation have installed curb markings along the Piney Branch corridor to prevent tragedies and indicate where it is and isn't safe for pedestrians to cross the street. As part of the Street Smart Campaign, Montgomery County Police will be stepping up their emphasis of traffic safety laws as well as issuing citations and warnings for failing to properly yield to pedestrians and drivers alike.

"It's imperative that we get the word out about pedestrian safety. We launch this new concept in order to address the temptations of some who run across the street mid-block or outside a curb-walk. Crossing the street can be a death defying act, and we hope through this campaign that the new curb markings will help pedestrians think twice before making impulsive decisions that result in dire consequences," explained Montgomery County Executive Isiah Leggett.

In Montgomery County, pedestrian deaths saw an eight percent decline, with a four percent drop in pedestrian collisions from 2009 to 2010 according to Isiah Leggett. Targeting engineering, education, and enforcement actions where the pedestrian collisions happen most frequently, like the Piney Branch corridor, has effectively reduced collisions.

"When a car and pedestrian try to occupy the same place, the car will always win. Of the 14 crashes that happened along Piney Branch Road, 11 were from pedestrians crossing mid-block. Pedestrians and drivers both have a responsibility to stay alert, and we in the County are trying our best to make sure this doesn't continue to happen," said Captain of the Montgomery County Police Department, Thomas Didone.

Engineering design changes are proven to significantly reduce pedestrian fatalities and injuries. The pilot program is the first to use curb markings and is the latest in a series of "Street Smart" engineering improvements across the greater Washington, DC region.

Additionally, bilingual Pedestrian Safety Promotion Teams will be intercepting and instructing jaywalkers on where and how to cross safely.

"The way people drive along this road can be reckless. I think the new curb markings are a good idea as long as people take the time to read them," replied Takoma Park resident Jonathan Velsey.



[Street Smart kicks off its fall 2011 pedestrian awareness campaign](#)

TBD

November 15, 2011

By John Hendel



Photo Credit: Street Smart

Not long ago, I relayed the news that our former District Department of Transportation director Gabe Klein has installed mannequins throughout Chicago to spotlight pedestrian deaths that occurred last year and to urge people to be more careful.

At the time, I considered the bigger pedestrian safety issues that face our traffic system and what DDOT is doing. The metro region's Street Smart campaign, which began in 2002 and deals with just these issues, launched its fall campaign recently. It will run from November 6 to December 3 and officially kicked off at an event in Silver Spring yesterday afternoon. Expect more signs, more caution, and more awareness. With the same cautionary spirit that Klein exercised in Chicago with his mannequins, Silver Spring, Maryland has added "Do Not Cross" markers to the some of their curbs in a pilot program on Piney Branch Road in response to the 13 pedestrian-car collisions that happened last year, WAMU reports. Street Smart was out there promoting awareness throughout the afternoon during the kickoff.

And another thing — these campaigns mean more citations. The Street Smart website proudly notes that in the spring of 2011 and fall of 2010 campaigns, "4,220 citations and 3,785 warnings were issued to motorists, pedestrians and cyclists." No one likes getting tickets, and this is all the more reason, beyond ethics and safety, to be more vigilant.

Yet how effective is fear at making people follow the law?



Pedestrian safety mannequins, "Do Not Cross" yellow signs, Street Smart videos, the other pedestrian cautionary traffic signals and posters spread throughout the city ... so many of them appeal to that classic attention-grabber of fear. The goal of these efforts is for people to recognize the real danger in our traffic

system and exercise greater caution. It's a fair goal and desire for any city agency or pedestrian advocacy group to have, and these campaigns, in which core messages are repeated time after time, are an excellent step at achieving it. The strategy, after all, worked rather well in demonizing the desire to drive drunk over the last half century.

But the fear-based efforts, from the citations to the ads to the mannequins, miss a core element of human behavior that results in these occasional deaths and collisions, and that's the inherent recklessness of many people in our transportation system. Whether driving or on foot, people are, as some pedestrians pointed out in the WAMU story, in a hurry, and in nowhere more apparently than in D.C. The education efforts required to get people to pay attention to pedestrians and broader safety issues are monumental. They'll take time and they'll take a lot of Street Smart-style campaigns. And even then, no campaign can be 100% successful, nor would that be, I imagine, a metric the planners would suggest is likely. Demonizing any behavior takes time, as we learned with drunk driving, and transportation officials, planners, and many community leaders are today attempting to elevate our pedestrian awareness and demonize behaviors like distracted driving.

Because the desire to rush, especially when pedestrians have the illusion of safety, is extraordinarily strong. The individual person never tends to believe that bad things will happen to them. Why not cross the street if there don't seem to be any cars coming? I see that pedestrian instinct at play every day, just as a glance at Facebook shows more than a few drivers who joke that pedestrians are just speed bumps. Bicyclists and drivers have their own safety issues, as the D.C. Council has likely heard much about in the last two weeks. Maybe a "Do Not Cross" marker will stop one or two people who would have casually stepped into traffic. Will it stop all though? Doubtful. And that's okay — there's only so much education and so much signage that a city can do, and government eventually has to rely on its citizens to exercise their judgment and proper understanding of danger and safety in traffic.

Take these few weeks of pedestrian awareness to heart here in the D.C. metro region — as we know, November is an especially dangerous month for those us out there on foot. The skies today are already looking rather dark.